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Ameritech Consolidated — A Few Words

Okay, you might imagine that I was as shocked as all of you when I landed in Miami and found out that Jane Burke was no longer with NOTIS! Besides people accusing me of having occult powers (ha!), a lot of people who rely on NOTIS were flabbergasted. So — Cerise Oberman (Director, SUNY Plattsburgh) took time out from winning the Miriam Dudley Bibliographic Instruction Award to help us come up with these questions. The answers were given by Paul Sybrowsky, President of Ameritech Library Services. — KS

ATG: Explain the new structure of Dynix and NOTIS and Ameritech Library Services. We understand that NOTIS and Dynix are separate entities within Ameritech, but various products are being merged and will continue to be merged or subsumed. Is NOTIS going to become only an acronym for academic libraries? Where does NOTIS fit into this whole thing? Do these changes significantly alter the direction of Dynix and NOTIS?

PS: This consolidation brings Dynix and NOTIS Systems together under a single management structure called **Ameritech Library Services**. Until now the two companies operated separately under separate leadership. Although we've cooperated on several joint development projects since 1992, in other areas we operated as different companies and even as competitors.

We've reorganized ourselves in the same way that libraries define themselves by library types. NOTIS Systems, now the Academic Division of Ameritech Library Services, will be responsible for sales and support to academic libraries of all types and sizes. Dynix, now the Public Division of Ameritech Library Services, will take responsibility in the same way for public libraries. In 1989 Dynix created its K-12 school library division called Scholar to provide this same focus for schools. The special library division rounds out the four divisions of what we call "The Library Systems Group." With this new organization, the library systems divisions concentrate their expertise and experience in serving the special needs of each type of library.

ATG: Why was this change necessary?

PS: These changes were fueled by the need to prepare for further growth of the overall organization. We're not in the enviable position of providing specialized soft-

ware and services to each type of library without having to spread resources across all types. Each division is staffed to provide all necessary implementation and support services, as well as any specialized services or products unique to a particular library type.

The consolidation most directly affects two areas of the company — sales support and administrative services. Our earlier announcement of sales channel separation meant that all Ameritech Library Services divisions could sell any product. As a result, sales support needed to be available centrally to support communication and maintain the information flow to sales teams and prospective customers. Sales support, including bid proposals, responses to RFPs, configurations, contract negotiation, and technical sales support, now serves the sales teams from a central support group.

Administrative services have been consolidated under one vice president to implement the same information and accounting systems and procedures. Accountability will be enhanced by a better flow of financial information between offices. Dynix has nearly a decade of experience in supporting international offices throughout the world, so it's not unfamiliar to us to coordinate financial or other activities between these organizations.

ATG: Was the reorganization because of the need for more profit? How will you achieve this without cutting staff? How will you achieve it by keeping two companies — Dynix and NOTIS?

PS: Recent organizational changes were not precipitated by profit and loss. Both companies were profitable before the consolidation. We recognized, however, that certain redundancies were adding costs and duplication of efforts to our operations. One redundancy was development work for two client/server systems called Dynix Marquis and NOTIS Horizon. Marquis was in development from 1990 to 1992 with the Microsoft Corporation as a development partner. It has been installed in more than 45 special and academic libraries. The Marquis software delivers proven client/server functionality with five modules already in their third release.

NOTIS Horizon, on the other hand, wasn't ready for general release with core modules still needing months of beta testing. Rather than reinvent the core modules (Circulation, Cataloging, Searching, Acquisitions and Serials), we decided to build on what already exists. The Academic Division client/server

development team is now devoting efforts to enhancing and extending the client/server product to best serve academic libraries. Many features which had been planned for future releases of NOTIS Horizon are being developed today. What better use of our considerable expertise in academic libraries and what better way to deliver this specialized product to the market more quickly to meet the growing demand?

ATG: Jane Burke was a founding member of NOTIS and her abrupt departure has left many of us stunned and mystified. Why didn't Ameritech work to find a way that Jane could be kept on and her expertise used? Did Ameritech search for ways for Jane to remain in the company?

PS: There's no question that, as a founding member of NOTIS, Jane Burke was responsible for its growth and continued success over the last decade. She deserves the respect of the library marketplace and the vendor community for her many contributions.

It's difficult for anyone accustomed to directing an organization to take a secondary role. We anticipate that Jane will continue to contribute her expertise in a significant way to the library community.

ATG: Can you give us a better sense of Ameritech Library Services' long term vision?

PS: The recent consolidation is completely consistent with the direction of both NOTIS and Dynix. Namely, we have created and delivered the world's best library automation systems and information access products to our customers and to the marketplace. Any responsive and responsible company always seeks ways to work more efficiently and effectively, just as progressive libraries do. Vendors who grow and thrive must respond to marketplace demands to develop an ever-increasing array of products and services. Ameritech is very supportive of our decision to go forward as an even stronger consolidated company offering the leading solutions for all types of libraries. It's never been our intent to do otherwise.

ATG: NOTIS and Dynix are both developing and marketing PC-based Z39.50 products. Will efforts to do this be merged? If so, which will become the standard within Ameritech Library Services?

PS: NOTIS and Dynix have developed



The Savage Marketplace is the theme of this year's (November 3-5) Charleston Conference (the fourteenth, thank heavens the 13th is over)! When I was in Miami (which I enjoyed much more than I expected to!) and when I wasn't talking to librarians, I was talking to publishers and vendors. And guess what they seemed THE MOST interested in?

Marketing. Both publishers and vendors wanted to know how to present products and services to libraries. That is, they wanted to know things like — should they offer regular subscriptions to CDs or just one time deals, should they mail out sample issues of new journals, how can they sell more books, should they be interested in EDI. What is Z39.50? Are libraries buying media? Are we interested in LANs or tape loaded databases? The list goes on and on . . .

And — I thought — why don't we do a regular column or feature in *ATG* on marketing to libraries. You know, from the vendor and publisher side, what products and services do libraries want? And from the librarian side what products and services do we like or don't we like? We could use a format like "Group Therapy" (see page 14) or we could de-

Marketing to Libraries — Call for Editor(s)

**And If You Don't Like the Title,
You can Change It!
Think of the Power and the Glory!**

velop something new and different.

This is a call for an editor or editors. Is there anyone out there who is interested in working on this column? Ideally, it should be a team of three — a publisher, a librarian, and a vendor, shouldn't it? In the meantime, the energetic **Toni Olshan** came up with this interesting survey. What is more near and dear to all of us than publishers' catalogs? More comments are welcomed — KS

Publishers' Catalogs: To Keep or Not to Keep?

by **Toni P. Olshan**
(Collection Management Librarian,
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When is the right time to let go of print media and to rely on electronic sources? Librarians and support staff at Alfred University's Herrick Memorial Library faced this question yet again when they considered eliminating their collection of publishers' catalogs, thereby saving considerable shelf space and staff time. The catalogs were rarely used either for ordering, verification or browsing. But before throwing them out, the Herrick staff consulted via the Internet with co-workers around the country.

Making use of the library support staff

listserv (LIBSUP-L) and the collection development listserv (COLLDV-L), the staff received twenty-eight responses from academic libraries of varying sizes and missions.

The responses did not point to a clear, universally best conclusion. Some libraries kept only the catalogs from major publishers, some kept only those from obscure publishers, some kept only audio visual and microform catalogs, some kept everything for several years and some kept almost nothing. The major trend seems to be to send catalogs to appropriate subject bibliographers/liaisons, and to call the publisher's 800 telephone number when verification through BIP, BIP+, and OCLC does not work. It is interesting to note that there was no mention of using the few catalogs which publishers have put on the Internet. It seems publishers are having to decide which way to jump — print or electronic?

Herrick Library made its decision after considering the replies from the listservs in a meeting of all the subject liaison librarians with the technical services person who initiated the question. The decision made was to keep the current year's catalog of major publishers and vendors; to keep video, compact disc, and microform catalogs, and to route all the rest directly to subject liaison librarians to use as they wish. ☛

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Z39.50 products cooperatively for nearly two years. Dynix sells and distributes the NOTIS TermPAC and WinPAC products as its Z39.50 clients. The Z39.50 standard was developed to provide search and retrieval capabilities for disparate systems. What better way to develop and test these capabilities than between our two disparate systems? The only development work unique to each company is the Z39.50 server software, required to convey requests to the native search

engine. NOTIS and Dynix have each developed Z39.50 servers supporting the current ANSI standard. Both companies are represented in the Z39.50 Implementors' Group and are lobbying for further development of the standard to support more sophisticated search features. We expect to expand our Z39.50 products as the standard moves forward and to make our products available to all customers of the various Ameritech Library Services divisions.

ATG: In terms of long-term strategy, is Ameritech going to purchase other online library systems? How committed is Ameritech to the library market?

PS: The Ameritech acquisition of Dynix and NOTIS is clear evidence of its unflagging interest in and commitment to the seminal role libraries play in today's information revolution. ☛